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“ Official reports relative to action about a municipal plant for gas or electric lighting have been received from 210 towns and cities. Included in this number are all those in which the population exceeds 1500. Of these municipalities 179 have taken no action during the year 1896.

“ The towns of Belmont, Concord, and Rockland, and the city of Holyoke, have considered the subject for the first time.

“ During the year the new plant in Chicopee has been put in operation, and Danvers has nearly completed a plant for the supply of commercial lights.

“ The towns of Braintree, Danvers, Hingham, Hull, Marblehead, Middleborough, Needham, North Attleborough, Peabody, Reading, Wakefield, and Wellesley, and the city of Chicopee, have now electric light plants in operation. Of these Middleborough and Wakefield only have works for the supply of gas. The towns of Needham and Wellesley have distributing plants for street lighting only, and purchase their electricity for this purpose from the Natick Gas and Electric Company. The town of Hingham has a distributing plant for both street and commercial use, but buys its electricity from the Weymouth Light and Power Company.”

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#### THE AGRICULTURAL POPULATION OF FRANCE.

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According to a report made to the Foreign Office of Great Britain by Mr. Austin Lee, commercial attaché to H. M. Embassy at Paris (*Foreign Office, Annual Series, No. 2,007*), the total number of the population of France living by agriculture (farmers, laborers, and their respective families) is estimated at 18,250,000 souls, or about half of the total population of France.

The agricultural classes are divided into two nearly equal groups, the masters being reckoned at 3,460,600, whilst of the laborers there are 3,452,904. Of the nearly 7,000,000 individuals cultivating the land a little more than one half (3,525,000) are owners of a more or less considerable portion of the soil. Thus, of the masters, 2,151,969 own the land they cultivate; while 968,328 are tenants, of whom 500,014 own a part of their farms. The number of *metayers* is calculated at 341,576, of whom 147,728 own plots of land. Out of

1,480,687 agricultural laborers, 727,374 own small plots of land. The 1,954,251 farm servants and 18,000 bailiffs, many of whom, however, as the sons of peasant proprietors, possess no land.

As regards the holdings and their extent, it appears that their total number amounts to 5,672,007. Of these 217 only are of more than 500 hectares (1235) acres; 28,586 range from 100 to 500 hectares (247 to 1235 acres); 56,866 from 50 to 100 hectares (123½ to 247 acres); 783,641 from 10 to 50 hectares (24 to 123½ acres); and 4,802,697 are less than 10 hectares (24 acres) in extent.

#### STATE AND FEDERAL STATISTICS OF SHEEP.

In an article in the December Number, 1897, of the *Bulletin of the National Association of the Wool Manufacturers* attention is directed to the discrepancy between Federal and State statistics of sheep.

"Accepting, as heretofore, the figures of the Department of Agriculture as to the number of sheep in the country on April 1, 1897, we are again obliged to call attention to the fact that these figures differ materially, in many instances, from those of the State authorities, which are those of the assessors, and almost without exception report a less number of sheep than that stated by the United States Department. A few of these cases are given herewith for illustration":—

		State Assessors.	U. S. Dept. of Agriculture.
Massachusetts.....	1896	34,091	46,653
“ .....	1897	33,000*	40,672
Ohio.....	1896	2,293,686	2,633,410
“ .....	1897	2,102,959	2,245,781
Iowa.....	1896	318,494	547,618
“ .....	1897	464,701	517,281
Kansas.....	1896	182,236	253,222
“ .....	1897	222,703	217,104
Wyoming.....	1897	1,391,795	1,533,620
North Dakota.....	1896	226,701	349,393
Texas.....	1895	1,589,378	3,487,663
“ .....	1895	2,386,822†	.....
“ .....	1896	2,140,889†	2,911,993

\* Estimated. Returns for 1897 not yet compiled.

† Both statements given in official report. Thirty-seven counties not reported.